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Senate votes to limit billboard permits

LANSING – The Senate today passed legislation aimed at preserving the view from Michigan's highways, said Sen. Tom George, R-Texas Township.

Senate Bill 567, sponsored by George, would amend the Highway Advertising Act to prohibit the Michigan Department of Transportation from issuing any new permits for a billboard until 2009, unless the applicant surrenders a previously issued permit.

"I have worked on this legislation for quite some time," said George. "This is a major victory for motorists who enjoy Michigan's scenic vistas."

The bill also allows an owner of a removed billboard to obtain an interim permit as long as the removed sign was not in violation of the law.

SB 567 is tie-barred to SB 568, which would establish a permit process for removal of vegetation and other growth from around highway advertising signs or billboards.

The bills now go to the House for consideration.

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